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ABSTRACT

A recognition of problems and priorities of Title VI outreach programs to encourage and facilitate international studies in grades K-12 is important in light of current trends to reduce funding. Title VI programs consist of networks among regional studies coordinators (e.g., African Studies, East Asian Studies) and linkages that disseminate information to educators and encourage utilization of educational research. Networking problems involve the rapid turnover in outreach coordinators and limited contact based on infrequent newsletters and annual meetings in which everyone is pressed for time. A major problem with linkages centers on the task of translating college-level resources for K-12 use; such problems can be circumvented by employing outreach coordinators grounded both in their specific world region and in educational research. Successful translation requires timing; gearing outreach materials to textbooks in use; involving teachers, administrators, and library/media personnel in outreach activities; and focusing efforts at elementary and middle school levels. Priorities include working with other professionals, overlapping and cooperating with other outreach networks, outlining uses of reduced funding, evaluating current outreach activities, examining attempts at institutionalization, and developing programs characteristic of a national resource center while at the same time serving local constituencies. (KC)

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OUTREACH NETWORKS AND LINKAGES: PROBLEMS, POTENTIALS, PRIORITIES

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INTRODUCTION

Before I treat the subject of this paper I would like to explain the nature of Title VI Outreach. We should remember that kindergarten through 12th grade outreach is only one of the multifaceted mandates facing every outreach coordinator. The exigencies of business, media, inter and intra institutional programming and the general community all demand a slot in the outreach timetable. A realistic acknowledgement of these additional demands - demands beyond K-12 outreach considerations - should temper our judgments and mandates.

Another caveat is in order. The purpose of this paper is to be critical. It is important to note that while I am critical or probing on the one hand - I am on the other hand cognizant of the many successes that outreach activities can claim. Outreach is a beleaguered area; outreach activities, housed in the college of arts and sciences on many campuses, must walk the tightrope between traditional ivy isolation and practical public programming. Many colleagues, therefore, may view K-12 outreach activities as aberrant if not distasteful. In view of this situation, therefore, outreach successes become even more precious. For many, these successes have come only after much hard work. These efforts are both acknowledged and appreciated. Critical comments are not intended to deprecate these achievements.

Caveats aside, therefore, the subject of this paper has been restricted to Title VI Outreach Networks and Linkages. To a certain extent the distinction between networks and linkages is an artificial one. Suffice it to say that there are at least two types of connective or interactive behaviors that are essential to most K-12 outreach activities; for the purposes of this paper they will be called networks and linkages.

NETWORKS

The networks examined here are the communications among outreach coordinators. Typically these networks are "area" or "region" centered. That is, there are networks of African, Asian, and other outreach coordinators. Most of these networks have been somewhat "institutionalized" and constitute standing committees of their respective parent professional organizations. For example, Asian Outreach Coordinators are members of the Committee on Teaching about Asia of the Association for Asian Studies; African Outreach Coordinators are part of the Outreach Committee of the African Studies Association, and Middle East Outreach Coordinators are part of the Outreach Committee of the Middle East Studies Association. Usually there is a rotating chair person, serving for a one or two year tenure. In addition, an informal newsletter - a kind of "in-house" chronicle - is a part of each network. While there are telephone and mail contacts throughout the year, often the only face to face meeting takes place at the yearly professional meeting.

In general, this type of outreach network has worked well. Indeed, even the controversial Rand study of Title VI centers singles out these networks for praise (Rand, 1981, Pg. 18). Perhaps the most important reason behind the success of these networks is the special esprit de corps shared by coordinators working in the same geographic area. This esprit de corps reflects the simple fact that while there is much that is generic to all outreach efforts - certain concerns are particular to

certain geographic areas. For example, responding to charges of unfair Japanese trade competition, combating stereotypes about the Middle East and remedying ignorance about the African continent all entail both common and unique techniques. Therefore, networks based upon areas or regions of the world recognize this and build upon the need to interact with others in the same situation.

PROBLEMS AND POTENTIALS OF THESE NETWORKS

The potentials of these networks are enormous. For example, when these networks function effectively there is a true sharing of resources, especially K-12 curriculum materials and workshop information. These networks, therefore, serve as informal clearinghouses of useful K-12 materials and methods. Further, effective dissemination of these materials and methods is aided by the understanding that free materials from any center's outreach program can be freely duplicated as long as credit is given.

The problems in this rather perfect arrangement revolve around personnel changes and the frailties of human efforts. The tenure of service for many outreach coordinators is quite short. This is especially true in centers where outreach work is farmed out to a series of graduate students, who are often unable to say no while knowing full well that they will be able to do precious little in a three month tenure. Each change in outreach personnel necessitates a concomitant crash course in "outreach history". For example, unless the previous outreach coordinator has left impeccable records and/or has had a series of long conversations, there is little chance that the new coordinator will not duplicate efforts and miss opportunities.

A litany of human frailties is perhaps not necessary but at least a brief mention is useful. Outreach newsletters take time and effort to produce. The compiliation and distribution of these newsletters entails hours of time - all of this time and effort is an uncompensated professional activity. Unless the chairperson for each area network has the support of his or her center this kind of

professional activity could be difficult if not impossible. Even with full support of the respective area center the undertaking is a weighty one. Human frailties aside, a network based upon three newsletter contacts per year is an imperfect one. Phone calls on an ad hoc basis are a partial solution but they are both time consuming and costly if employed on a regular basis. Further, meeting once a year at a professional meeting does not lend itself to a period of fruitful discussion or reflective thinking. Rather, furtive dashes to sessions, unfinished conversations and rushed agendas are the order of the day. I'm not even going to mention the fact that some outreach coordinators must use this occasion for an earnest job search. Time for the serious business of outreach networks is obviously not available in this milieu.

LINKAGES

Every outreach program has a number of contacts or linkages that directly involve K-12 education. The potentials in this area are tremendous. Title VI Outreach Programs are what we might call "total" or "complete" resources. These programs constitute a conduit for a plethora of college and international resources. Area centers are, after all, in the vanguard of new research and scholarship, exchange programs, and library collections. Further, these area centers have at least a partial federal mandate to share their largesse under the banner of outreach. While this might seem the best of all possible worlds it is not necessarily an easy task. The task of translating or decoding college level resources for K-12 consumption is a weighty one.

Linkages to K-12 education have been successful in many instances. The common element in these successes seems to be an outreach coordinator grounded not only in his or her region of the world but also grounded in educational research - especially

change strategy. Educational change, once analogous to alchemy, now has a rich collection of literature and research to aid the outreach coordinator. That is, our linkages do not have to be hit or miss - we can now identify and target responsive pressure points and personnel. An ignorance of these educational change strategies can often result in misguided efforts and wasted resources.

PROBLEMS AND POTENTIALS OF LINKAGES

As mentioned earlier, linkages with K-12 education require a certain sensitivity and a certain knowledge of the extensive research available. A few examples of K-12 "constituted knowledge" are noted below. Adherence to these guidelines can produce useful economies of scale - ignorance of them can lead to weak linkages.

1. Timing - a reading of the research on educational change strategy stresses the importance of infusing change strategies and materials into the natural routinized sequence of events in the school year. In service efforts, for example, can often simply be added to a city or district in-service calendar.

2. Textbooks - again, major national studies have shown that textbooks set the instructional agenda in classrooms throughout the country. Therefore, fugitive outreach materials, if they are to be truly useful, should generally be geared and in some cases keyed to the textbooks in use. This is especially crucial in textbook adoption states where the textbook tenure is being extended. In Indiana, for example, teachers now have a 6 - not 5-year tenure with their textbook. Outreach programs can be enormously useful in this kind of a situation.

3. Significant others - although teachers are the key actors in each educational scenario there are at least two other groups that should be consulted - administrators and library/media personnel. Rarely can educational change take place without at least the acquiescence of the administration, especially the principal. Librarians and media coordinators are often overlooked in-house disseminators and proselytizers of outreach efforts. They can be enormously helpful in achieving outreach goals.

4. Ownership - Teachers can only feel a sense of ownership in outreach activities if they actually make a contribution and have a "say" in shaping the program. Needs assessments are often an ideal vehicle for this kind of communication. Without this kind of interactivity an outreach program is a "one-way", "trickle-down" linkage rather than the synergy of professionals who have ownership in a project.

5. Curriculum - In the social studies the traditional expanding horizon approach still dominates the national curriculum; world cultures are taught at roughly the 6th and 7th grade level. Again, the textbook selected often determines this curricular configuration. Further, studies and early childhood research reveal that younger children, especially those in the middle school, are receptive to interdisciplinary approaches to world cultures. Wisdom dictates that we focus outreach efforts on the elementary and middle school. Yet, the bulk of outreach efforts targets high school students. This "overreach", which Lorraine Strasheim refers to, reflects the fact that many outreach personnel feel most comfortable working with the high schools. High schools are viewed as simply lower level models of colleges while middle and elementary schools are wholesale terra incognita.

Effective linkages with K-12 education must capitalize on the realities listed above as well as many others. The rewards, as noted above, include economies of scale and a true application of the multiplier effect.

PRIORITIES FOR NETWORKS AND LINKAGES

Networks and linkages, imperfect as they may be in this imperfect world, are already in place. These must now be finely tuned and their attention directed to where they will do the most good. Following are some priorities for the 80's.

1. Despite the comfortability of working with professionals in Title VI outreach for the same area, we should consciously expand our networks to include professionals in analogous positions. Museum personnel are an especially appropriate

group to include. For example, the network of Asian outreach coordinators already includes Leslie Swartz, a China expert at the Harvard-Boston Children's Museum. Recently, however, we asked Susan Stobb of Chicago's Field Museum, director of the museum's educational programs, including Asia Day, to join Leslie in a workshop on museum outreach at the annual meeting of the Association for Asian Studies. Stobb's presentation was insightful because it provided a model for emulation across the country. By working cooperatively with faculty and outreach personnel at the University of Chicago's area studies centers the Field Museum was able to provide the community and especially children with a rich array of cultural experiences.

Other analogous personnel who might be included in future networks include state consultants for foreign languages, humanities and the social studies, curriculum developers and other state and district level curriculum supervisors. People in these positions can open doors, legitimate outreach efforts and help increase success.

2. In addition to expanding our outreach networks we should at least periodically overlap them. We have much to learn from each other. This point was validated last year at a Wingspread conference for the purpose of institutionalizing the national network of Middle East Outreach Coordinators. Marylee Wiley and I attended as resource persons who could provide information on how the African and Asian networks were organized. As might be expected the benefits accruing from this arrangement were far from being one-sided or one-way. For example, there were representatives from the educational divisions of major corporations such as Exxon, Mobil and Standard Oil of California present. I felt that we Asian and African outreach coordinators had much to learn from Middle East outreach personnel who had worked with these corporate educational divisions for quite some time. Concomitantly, the Middle East outreach coordinators found the presence of African and Asian outreach coordinators useful since they could pick our brains and hopefully avoid our mistakes.

I should mention here that we do not have to travel half-way across the continent in order to interact with outreach coordinators working in different world areas. Many of us have counterparts on our own campuses; many of us already have joint outreach newsletters, activities, resource centers and programs. These efforts must be accelerated in the 80's.

3. Any discussion of networks leads to the question of cooperation with other networks. An obvious target of cooperation is the growing global studies network spearheaded by Global Perspectives in Education, Inc. The avenues for cooperative efforts are many - especially in the K-12 realm; the exact modus operandi for this cooperation has not yet been divised. We are still searching for a kind of "curricular fit" between global and area studies. Exploration of this issue should be a priority for the 80's since meaningful cooperative networks can only be devised after we learn how we interlock.

4. Linkage to K-12 education while continuing as a priority item will demand even more creative efforts. Block grant funding is a spectre yet to be reckoned with; shrinking federal dollars are a nightmare currently haunting us. Funding is certainly a priority item for the 1980's. Beyond a question of simply funds is the more important question of "funds for what?" What items should be set as high or top priority? Materials? In-service training? Pre-service training? Class demonstrations? Are there some kinds of programming we should abandon? How can demographic information about the nature of pre-collegiate teachers help us? These priorities have to be set and reset as configurations change.

5. Another priority for the 80's should be the evaluation of our extant K-12 outreach activities. Reams of data are not the end product here, rather, guidelines for constantly improving our efforts. Field-test information, informal formative

evaluation through teacher advisory councils and naturalistic evaluation all have a role to play here. Naturalistic evaluation, recognizing as it does the synergy of many efforts seems ideally suited for evaluating outreach programs. Just as clearinghouses have prevented us from "reinventing the wheel" vis a vis materials, so too, effective evaluation can do the same for us in the area of techniques. Including evaluation, especially formative evaluation, in all our programs should be another priority item for the 80's. It should be mentioned that another benefit of evaluation is the credibility it provides vis a vis funding agencies.

6. In the past there has been much talk of the need to professionalize and institutionalize outreach. I would posit that the quandry is not quite so simple. First of all, I think the need to professionalize is the least of our worries since it has already been attained. Rather, we need to examine more closely the double-edged sword of institutionalization. Outreach is on the one hand an ad hoc effort; its strength lies in its ability to respond flexibly and creatively to a variety of fresh stimuli. While an ad hoc nature is an outreach strength it is also a pitfall; an ad hoc entity in a bureaucratized university is by nature aberrant and often suspect. On the other hand institutionalizing outreach offers a possible solution. Securing institutional support and funding from a variety of campus sources can perhaps guarantee some stability for the vulnerable outreach program. There is obviously another side to this institutional largesse. The "strings" are often a pre-conceived activity agenda that leaves little room for flexible ad hoc programming. A priority for the 80's, therefore, should be the creation of new institutional configurations that facilitate outreach programming. For example, perhaps K-12 outreach efforts should be housed in or at least co-sponsored by the School of Education; perhaps K-12 outreach efforts can be conducted in conjunction with School of Education field operations or service centers.

7. The next priority is related to the quandry just mentioned - namely - how can we develop outreach programs that address the federal mandate to be a national resource center while at the same time servicing local constituencies? Concomitantly, how can we devise outreach programs that are the service arm of highly specialized area centers while still servicing K-12 educators who need more all-inclusive global studies materials? Setting priorities for the nature of outreach content and techniques in the face of these paradoxes will demand our future energies.

8. Finally then, there is our personal priority for the 80's; how can outreach coordinators, working with global studies educators and others, continue to be effective advocates for K-12 international studies in the future? How can we set mutual priorities that will reflect what is for many a lifetime commitment and priority? A recent flyer from the University of Wisconsin's Office of International Studies and Programs helps to bring this mandate into perspective. The flyer explains that budget proposals for 1983 would reduce Federal aid for the 90 Title VI centers from 28 million to 12 million. We now spend nationally 28 million on Title VI area centers that generate numerous spin-off programs and cost sharing amounting to approximately 9 university dollars for each 1 federal dollar. How much is 28 million? - the flyer explains - it is not quite, not even 1/7 the cost of one B-1 Bomber! In light of this, is there anyone who can afford to postpone concerted cooperative efforts on behalf of international education?